DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 242 615 SO 015 520

TITLE	Local School Boards and the Arts: A Call for Leadership.
INSTITUTION	Arts, Education, and Americans, Inc., New York, N.Y.
SPONS AGENCY	Alcoa Foundation, Pittsburgh, Pa.; Ford Foundation, New York, N.Y.; Mott (C.S.) Foundation, Flint, Mich.; National Endowment for the Arts, Washington, D.C.
REPORT NO	AEA-3
PUB DATE	80
NOTE	26p.; For a related document, see ED 206 529. Photographs may not reproduce clearly.
AVAILABLE FROM	The Arts, Education, and Americans, Inc., Box 5297, Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10163 ($3.00).
PUB TYPE	Reports - Descriptive (141)
EDRS PRICE	MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS	Art Appreciation; *Art Education; Art Expression; *Board of Education Policy; Boards of Education; Budgeting; Community Involvement; *Community Support; Cultural Activities; Curriculum Development; Educational Finance; Elementary Secondary Education; Experiential Learning; Humanistic Education; Humanities; Local Issues; Policy Formation; Politics of Education; *School Community Relationship; School Districts; *School Support; Theater Arts

ABSTRACT

One of a series designed to help school arts support groups increase public commitment to their programs, this monograph addresses the concerns of local school boards in instituting or maintaining arts education. Content is divided into 10 sections that cover rationale for arts education, local problems of budgeting and cutbacks, obtaining backing of key school administrators, gaining community consensus, stating policies and objectives, long-range planning, program evaluation, and the need for strong leadership. The bulk of the monograph focuses on strategies for developing community commitment to arts in the schools. Divided into subsections, the report discusses methods of combining budget requests, obtaining assistance, using publicity effectively, using community arts organizations, establishing networks, choosing school board candidates, and presenting arts education as one of the "basics." (LP)

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Local school boards and the arts: a call for leadership

A series of reports from The Arts, Education, and Americans, Inc. 3

SP 015520

FOREWORD

Despite the unprecedented flourishing of the arts in America today, arts programs in the nation's schools have not experienced a corresponding expansion. In fact, with nationwide public attention focused on such problems as declining enrollment, vandalism, low test scores, and spiraling inflation, budgetary priorities are dictating the reduction of school arts programs. In some school districts, arts programs are being eliminated entirely.

We believe that school arts programs are *basic* to individual development and a sound education. Further, we believe that the arts should be used to stimulate learning and self-expression, and recognized as valid ways to learn. If school arts programs are to continue and expand, they require the support of educators, school board members, parents, artists, arts administrators, students, community leaders, legislators, and government agencies.

The Arts, Education, and Americans, Inc. (AEA) has established a National Advocacy Program for Arts in Education addressed to these groups of individual advocates. AEA is a national organization formed in 1977 following the publication of *Coming to Our Senses*, the Report of the National Panel on The Arts, Education, and Americans, David Rockefeller, Jr., Chairman.

The AEA Advocacy Program, which encourages the cooperative action of these groups to ensure local level support for school arts programs, includes a public awareness campaign and consumer information service. The service provides Advocacy Program enrollees with a variety of arts in education information–the AEA newsletter, access to the AEA speaker referral service, informal consultation, and monographs that address pertinent arts in education issues and topics.

This monograph, part of an ongoing series, speaks to one or more of the aforementioned school arts support groups. While we recognize that few monographs will speak directly to everyone, we attempt in each to address a variety of individuals. We hope this monograph will prove helpful to you in your support of arts in education. If you have not yet enrolled in the AEA National Advocacy Program and would like to do so, write to:

The Arts, Education, and Americans, Inc.
Box 5297, Grand Central Station
New York, New York 10163

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

With grateful appreciation, we wish to thank the following organizations for helping to make possible AEA's National Advocacy Program for Arts in Education and, as part of that program, the ongoing monograph series: the National Endowment for the Arts, the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, the Ford Foundation, and the Alcoa Foundation.

AEA's Board of Directors and Advocacy Advisory Group provided insight on the shaping of the Advocacy Program, and the Advisory Group in particular spent many hours reviewing monograph outlines and drafts.

The Advocacy Program is coordinated by Educational Facilities Laboratories, a division of the Academy for Educational Development. AED Senior Vice President and EFL Division Director Alan C. Green serves as Project Administrator. EFL's Nancy Morison Ambler is Project Director and editor of the monograph series. Deborah C. Creighton and Barbara R. Strong were responsible for editorial and photo research for this monograph.

We acknowledge with gratitude the hundreds of artists, arts administrators, community leaders, educators, federal, state, and local government administrators, parents, and school board members who continue to share with us their knowledge and myriad of experiences in the realm of school arts programs. Without their patient and detailed explanations of how their own programs are designed, managed, and expanded–without their special vignettes about these programs–we would be unable to produce the monographs.

Finally, an important word of thanks goes to Richard A. Lacey, author of *Local School Boards and the Arts*. A consultant and writer who specializes in the field of education, he brings a variety of important credentials to the authoring of this publication. Mr. Lacey has taught English and media studies in secondary schools and colleges, and has served as an educational planner, foundation staff member, and headmaster of an independent school in New York City.

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Local school boards and the arts: a call for leadership

You care . . .

You are a member of the local school board and care about school arts programs. After assessing the "state of the arts" in your school district, you have found:

☐ Enrollment is declining, budget cuts and layoffs seem inevitable, and administrators predict rough sledding for nonessential programs. Many parents and teachers believe that this means goodbye to the arts when the budget is determined. But is this gloomy prediction justified?

☐ Arts educators throughout the school district are proud of their programs, yet as a group they have no clear central message. They seem intent on protecting their own disciplines and separate pieces of the budget. Can you help the professionals advocate the arts more effectively?

☐ Arts advocates and professional arts educators in the school district, concerned that local budgets for all school programs are becoming tight, recently agreed to concentrate their energies upon a strategy for attracting state and federal funding for the school district and lobbying for arts legislation. They have asked your opinion of this strategy and have requested additional suggestions. What should you tell them?

☐ A summary of school district priorities, derived from state department of education guidelines, includes basic skills, career education, and state and federal mandates for educating the handicapped. How can you ensure that administrators and fellow school board members fully understand that the arts should be incorporated within these priorities?

☐ Members of local community arts groups have perceived school board members as uninformed about the arts and unsympathetic to the plea for better school arts programs. How can you help them assess the board accurately and relate to it appropriately in ways that promote quality arts programs?

This report is designed to help you respond to these questions, and exert leadership to enable the arts to flourish in the schools.

The future isn't what it used to be

School boards once enjoyed windfalls of funds for innovation and expansion. Today they face avalanches of legislative mandates, state tax caps, declining enrollments, and increasing costs. However idealistic the typical school board member may be, he or she also must be pragmatic, conscious not only of costs but of the wishes of the community.

Furthermore, school board members must increasingly focus on the substance of schooling as well as its cost and structure. As Thomas Shannon, executive director of the National School Boards Association, pointed out in 1978, "There is a nationwide upsurge in school board member concern for and involvement in school district curriculum issues. More and more, board members are facing squarely the important questions of what children are learning and should be learning in schools." In his foreword to the NSBA report, *The Arts In Education*, a digest of *Coming To Our Senses* (the official report of the national Panel on Arts, Education, and Americans), Shannon went on to say: "Much of this discussion has been about 'basics' and 'minimal competency,'" yet that very trend also has helped to stimulate "a vocal plea among advocates of arts education: *'Art, too, is basic!* When you go back to basics, take art along.'"

As a school board member, you should become familiar with the NSBA report, for it was written expressly "to familiarize education decision makers with what is and can be done with arts education in the elementary schools." The report acknowledges that "school board members generally have not been strong advocates of improved arts programs," perhaps because "questions about the importance of arts education have simply not been raised with board members."

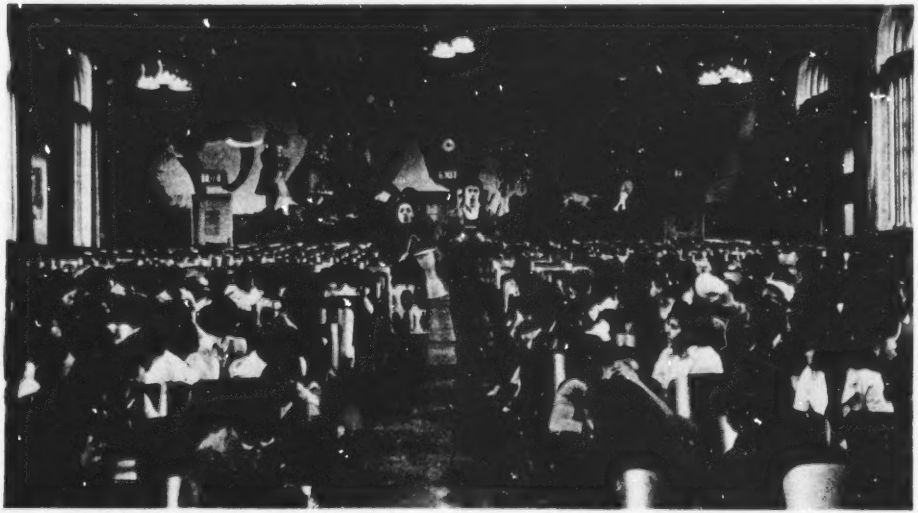
The school board member is well suited to a leadership role, because the board is legally responsible for determining the priorities that reflect enduring educational aims and community values. It is these aims and values that professional educators are employed to translate into educational programs.

Budget issues

The school board determines its priorities through the budget, the major instrument for establishing short-term local educational policies. General statements of school district aims represent long-range beliefs and intentions. However, it is the budget which substantiates the strength of school board commitments to its broad aims. William Helder, director of curriculum in Lansing, Michigan, schools, explains why many praiseworthy intentions fail to become realities when policy statements are translated into budget for staff. "It looks terrific when the board says, 'Every child should be encouraged to pursue his creativity in the visual arts to his highest potential,' but when they provide one arts resource person for every twenty buildings, they haven't followed through."

The allocation of limited funds in a school district is above all a political process, one which invites and indeed requires citizen participation. You can use this political process to assure students the benefits of strong arts programs, for you have special leverage for exerting leadership within the representative decision-making body, the board itself. After public hearings, the budget is approved by a simple majority vote of the school board. Thus, the number of policymakers who must be persuaded of the case for the arts is small and relatively manageable–often no more than two or three people who can join you to form a majority.

Nevertheless, the individual school board member who advocates the arts is in a ticklish position when acting as part of a corporate entity, for the board ultimately must answer to the public. To promote funding for the arts without visible and cogent support from the community is practically impossible. Board policies reflected in the budget represent the end of the budget-making process, not the beginning. For this reason, the crucial stages of participation by coalitions of parents, arts groups, teachers, and others are the early ones. In the long run, the selling job has to be with those who ultimately must help foot the bill–the community.



At the outset of the budget-making process, examine the following questions:

☐ Is there sufficient provision for arts specialists and materials to realize stated goals and objectives?

☐ Are arts provided for in all areas of the curriculum?

☐ Have strong supervisory positions been created to carry out policies? (These may range from supervisors of art and music to a coordinator or director of arts programs in the central office.)

☐ Does the capital budget provide ways to create favorable environments for the arts in future building programs or renovations? How is planning managed?

Increasingly, prospects of budget cutting and reducing the work force dominate where enrollment is declining and where governmental mandates require extensive local expenditures. The conventional pattern is that districts immediately eliminate

so-called enrichment courses and "frills"–art, music, drama, dance–valuable programs which may have taken years to plan and implement. Yet this pattern is not necessary.

For example, schools in both Seattle, Washington, and Jefferson County, Colorado (west of Denver), have suffered budget cuts of nearly 30 percent in recent years, yet school arts programs have not suffered disproportionately. In Seattle a full period each day was eliminated in all schools. Seattle schools arts coordinator Ray Thompson explains, "The district reduced all courses not required for graduation, but did not single out any one program. That translates to concern about programs, for the obvious thing to do would be to cut them." James Allison, arts coordinator for Jefferson County schools, says that the school board's firm understanding of the value of arts programs has ensured their stability. "As a result of the financial situation we aren't able to expand much, but we're maintaining what we have," he notes.

Jefferson County recently received a $97,000 grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities for secondary school students to study local cultures–a project that focuses mainly on the arts. The school board has agreed to allocate funds to cover costs of the three-year grant at the rate of one-third per year. Over the last few years, the board has allocated funds to cover the ongoing costs of about 75 percent of specially funded programs in the arts. This case reveals an important form of school board leadership, for a board member can promote the arts by making sure that the board agrees in advance to carry out a specific commitment to establish and maintain a valuable educational program.

It is reasonable to assume that school board members and administrators do *not* wish to curtail school arts programs, yet they need help in avoiding such measures. That help must come from the professionals in the school system and from the community itself–people who must become your active allies.

Turning an administrator into an ally

Not even the most enlightened policy aim of a school board to preserve or promote the arts in schools stands much chance of succeeding if the superintendent, central office staff, and principals do not understand and endorse the importance of school arts programs. Dr. Paul Houston, superintendent of the Princeton, New Jersey, schools, argues that appeals on behalf of the arts "must be made to the enlightened self-interest of the administrator and the board." As he explains in a 1980 issue of *Art Educator:*

☐ Teaching of the arts need not be restricted to arts specialists. Research in and development of curriculum and instruction in the arts over the past decade have created strategies in which the arts relate closely one to another and, rather than being treated as separate subjects, are infused throughout the curriculum. They become a part of everything–reinforcing, fulfilling, and breathing life into the total curriculum.

☐ Arts programs help pull in outside resources and utilize those already available. Arts groups and volunteers can be recruited to assist with school arts programs.

☐ A program can be a springboard to other areas–a focal point for staff renewal activities or an alternative school program. It can become a hook upon which to hang other programs and school improvements.

☐ The arts produce a bonanza of good public relations. Many tangible results can be shared. People have a good time, and systems that have arts programs can point to reduced disciplinary problems. Programs have led to decreased vandalism. Children are happier and feel a part of what's going on and, therefore, do not take out their frustrations on the building.

Developing consensus

While school board members are accustomed to gauging the public pulse, many do not like to think of themselves as "politicians." Nevertheless, pressure groups are a fact of life for any school board. Groups lobby on behalf of bilingual education, children with learning disabilities, women's athletics, and many other causes. The arts advocate must become actively involved at the grassroots level as well, or be forced to the rear of the line. Following are some political strategies and tactics for helping arts advocates enable you to build among your board colleagues the best possible case for the arts. These strategies reflect the essential spirit of the American political process–the struggle to achieve consensus. Your efforts to help mobilize the thoughts and actions of those who advocate the arts can turn diffuse hopes into funds for programs and staff when consensus is reached.

Combine budget requests where feasible in order to claim collectively the largest possible percentage of the budget. Art, music, and physical education staff should present a coherent, unified message–one with a well-reasoned philosophic rationale together with costs and statistics.

Skillfully present the case. Persuasive politicians use words and actions effectively in order to dramatize their points. Instead of relying solely on statistics, advocates who represent the arts should highlight the issue with examples or comparisons to clarify the meaning of the numbers. Presentations and testimony by teachers, administrators, students, and especially strongly committed parents can be convincing.

Use publicity carefully, and make sure that the press attends crucial budget hearings that concern the arts.

Numbers count. Encourage coalitions of groups advocating the arts to attend board meetings as early as possible in the budget-making process. Forty parents and other local citizen advocates at a budget hearing –especially on a rainy evening–can be impressive.

Obtain and publicize assistance for local schools in arts education–from volunteers, contracted services, and special grants. Assistance can come from many sources, including local colleges and universities, community arts groups, and individual artists. For example, university teacher education programs increasingly are shifting their emphasis from pre-service to in-service teacher training. Some district staff development programs have begun using university staff in consulting roles that directly assist schools and teachers in classrooms or teacher centers, thus providing special training sessions within the school system.

Staff development that builds expertise in the arts among a widening group of teachers (including but not confined to arts teachers) should improve the general capacity of the schools to address the needs of a diverse student population.

As the effects of these new teaching capacities become evident–in student motivation, tone of a school or classroom, and parent satisfaction–professional advocacy for the arts can become intense. At its best, a strong arts program improves the quality of life in the workplace. The arts can produce indispensable fringe benefits in improved working conditions for teachers and administrators.

Bring community arts organizations into the act. Too often, these organizations have not made their presence or their resources known to the board. Frequently, if local organizations–for example, a string quartet or photography group–have never related directly to school board members, they have a limited understanding of the role of the board or the ways that mutually beneficial cooperation might be developed. Your efforts as an individual board member can spell the difference between apathy and collaboration on the part of these groups. Often local arts organizations may be able and willing to offer resources, materials, expertise, and even special links to funding agencies such as a local or state arts council.

The schools can also help local arts groups. If a board decision to cut costs affects a community arts organization—however inadvertently—an alert board member sensitive to the needs of arts groups might be likely to spot implications. For example, a measure to reduce energy consumption and keep schools open only during class time could affect plans of a local thespian society to rehearse and produce their season plays in a school's auditorium.

Support your allies working in the schools. Create a visible network of successful teachers in the arts by ensuring that your board colleagues have ample exposure to these teachers' work with students. For example, the White Plains, New York, school board rotates its meetings among different schools featuring arts programs, and includes demonstrations and inspections before, during, and after meetings.

Remember that individual artists and volunteers from arts groups who work in the schools need understanding and support. Their acceptance and success in the schools is not always automatic. Individual artists, for instance, often are isolated in schools. Some may feel that classrooms, incessant bells, and various regulations stifle artistic creativity. Others may find it difficult to relate well to students, for they may not possess strong teaching skills.

At times, proponents of school arts programs utilizing the talents of local artists discover too late that the artists' enthusiasm has waned drastically. Such unfortunate results can be prevented with sound management, especially the provision of methods of supervisory support and regular assessment of performance at the outset of the program. Before a new and possibly controversial or experimental program in the arts is approved, be sure that managerial support is available and in place.

Become involved with a local arts council. Lucy Abraham, a Little Rock, Arkansas, school board member, has served as a member of the arts council in her community. "Having a board member on the council is one of the best things that can be done for the arts in education," she says. Her role as liaison between the board and the council has generated support for the arts from other board members.

Nancy Wooten, a Winston-Salem, North Carolina, board member is also a member of the local arts council, which has granted funds to the schools for several projects. Partly as a result of this connection, an attitude has grown among board members who "feel strongly that art and creative leisure activities are part of being an educated person," according to Ms. Wooten. "If you don't have that, then you will not have impetus for any policy or programs."

Be aware of the deliberations of any group–formal or informal, permanent or ad hoc–that discusses the curriculum on a regular basis. (One reason that boards create curriculum committees is to develop information necessary to allocate funds.) This will help you make other board members more sensitive to the impact of board financial decisions upon the curriculum.

Build or join networks of arts advocates. As a policymaker in education, you should become familiar with trends and issues explored in professional literature. Keep in touch especially with arts administrators who attend professional conferences. Seek out like-minded board members and administrators in other school districts who can help you clarify your views and learn about developments elsewhere.

Find out about exemplary arts programs from the people in these networks–where they exist, what their components are, how they were developed, how other school boards view them. Encourage appropriate teachers and administrators to visit schools where these programs exist. Perhaps you know a family planning to take a vacation in a city where an excellent school arts program is operating. Or you may know someone who travels extensively on business and would visit an outstanding program and report on it. Such initiatives can stimulate interest among parents as well as school board members.

Be alert to indications of candidates' understanding of and commitment to school arts programs. The school board occasionally considers various candidates for important administrative positions (particularly superintendent, assistant superintendent for curriculum and instruction, or principal). The focus of attention, of course, will be upon administrative capabilities. However, a candidate's responses to questions about the arts often reveal insights about the range of his or her educational perspective and capability to provide educational leadership.

Tie arts to the "basics." Do not assume that the "back to basics" movement necessarily is opposed to the arts. This highly publicized and simplistic movement has been shifting perceptibly toward less doctrinaire concepts of balanced curricula which include the arts. Be certain that written documents from the board make clear that the arts are fundamental to a sound education–for example, as systems of communication and instruments of self-discipline, motivation, creative thought, and action. Above all, take part in drafting standards to include aesthetic competencies as part of basic life skills. Bolster your position with statements and position papers from an authoritative source such as a state education department.

Thirty-one states have written policies mandating the arts in education. A school district can use such policies in part to justify a strong local commitment to the arts. Seattle, for instance, has developed its policy for the arts based upon the Washington State Basic Education Act of 1977, which includes the goal of enabling students to achieve skills generally recognized as a requisite to learning:

- ☐ the ability to distinguish, interpret, and make use of words, numbers, and other symbols including sounds, shapes, and textures;
- ☐ to organize words and other symbols into acceptable verbal and nonverbal forms of expression, colors, shapes, textures. . .

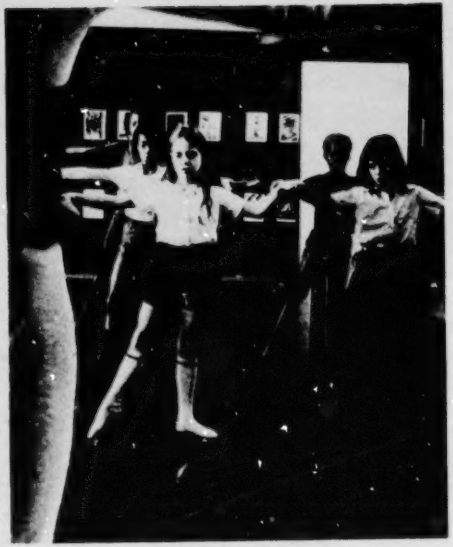
Don't let your allies march to different drummers, for their political effectiveness depends in part upon unity of purpose. Seek a consensus among community arts activists and teachers from varied educational disciplines (such as the visual and performing arts) about the role and importance of arts in the schools. Do not overlook drama teachers in English departments or dance teachers in physical education departments. Achieving unanimity among such diverse representatives may seem as challenging as the budget-making process itself, but it is no less crucial.

As a school board member, you should make sure that professionals and lay advocates of school arts programs understand that preserving and improving existing programs and obtaining local support for these programs are basic budgetary priorities. The prospect of seeking outside funding and lobbying for new state or federal legislation to support the arts in the schools may appeal to some activists. However, such investments of time and energy can be relatively inefficient. Most funds to promote school arts programs come from local sources.

Exercise a legitimate advocacy role on the school board by influencing its meeting agenda. The discretion a school board uses in its agenda-setting varies widely. Sometimes special meetings are called to discuss educational issues; sometimes the agenda is a mixed bag. Productive questions include: How might we assess the "state of the arts" in our district? How best can we evaluate the effectiveness of our arts programs, individually and on a comprehensive basis? Because the school board is obligated to be responsive primarily to the public rather than to a single member or interest group, it is wise to adopt a low-key approach to agenda-setting.

One appropriate tactic is to ask questions about the role of the arts during discussions of broad topics that should include the arts. School staff development, for example, is receiving increased attention nationwide as a means of improving the professional capacities of an aging teaching force in which turnover of staff is low. Staff development takes a variety of forms in a district. Different types of teacher training may be contained within a number of programs designed to accomplish complex educational goals–for example, to improve the academic achievement of disadvantaged children or to "mainstream" handicapped children into regular classes. Although teacher training is usually a component of new programs mandated by legislation, it may not include any experiences with the arts unless someone (preferably the teacher) formally requests training in the arts. The school board member can be instrumental in enabling teachers' voices to be heard as new programs are considered.

The place of the arts in teacher training programs is an often neglected subject in part because training generally is designed



to achieve specific short-term objectives–objectives that do not necessarily include the arts. The neglect of the arts in most teacher training programs reflects shortsightedness and a lack of leadership rather than a lack of regard for the arts. You therefore have an opportunity to exercise leadership by ensuring that long-range policy intentions concerning the arts are incorporated within short-range efforts to enable teachers to meet their students' diverse needs.

Building a tradition

While the budget reflects short-term policymaking, the most effective way to exert leadership over time is to build traditions that take the form of long-range policy. John Mason, a former Minneapolis, Minnesota, school board member, emphasizes promoting advocacy of the arts among top administrators. "If someone in high administration agrees that art is important as an integral rather than an adjunct part of education, then staff will generate ideas and proposals. The board should create an atmosphere in which staff perceive that ideas are welcome and art is important."

An incumbent Minneapolis board member, Jane Starr, believes that school board leadership grows from a generally positive attitude toward the arts throughout the school system. The Minneapolis board approves programs, but it also encourages development of grant requests and allocates funds for successful experiments. For example, the board voted recently to continue a program which costs about

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$50,000 and enables students to work outside school buildings with artists. Such activities which result in direct payments to nonschool personnel would be prominent targets for cuts in many other districts.

Building a strong tradition of a priority for the arts in a school district is, of course, a task requiring leadership sustained over time. In order to be effective, leadership from the school board must be translated into commitments from professionals–ranging from top administrative levels to individual school and classroom teachers. The key to effective leadership is constant and accurate communication throughout the school system.

Sometimes it may be necessary for administrators to create special roles to ensure a steady flow of information. By providing administrative latitude (for example, through board resolutions) in determining how the system will fulfill certain functions, the school board can stretch its financial commitment to the arts. Joan Sanger, an arts administrator in White Plains, New York, provides an insight into why special roles to foster communication have helped the White Plains Arts in General Education Program to succeed. "In every building there is an in-school coordinator who works with classroom teachers. You have a whole line of people that builds commitment." Teachers perform in-school coordination by devoting a portion of their time to this administrative function. Because this activity is contained within a teacher's assigned work load, the administrative innovation actually represents an additional financial commitment to the arts by the school board.

Dr. Ronald Topping, director of the White Plains program, says that the many offerings in the arts now available in elementary and intermediate schools grew over time. The momentum for these programs and for hundreds of similar projects around the country developed in 1976 from

Architects-in-Schools. This program, a component of the Artists-in-Schools program, was originated and funded for the most part by the National Endowment for the Arts. The White Plains school board expanded its $16,000 program after grant funds expired and hopes eventually to expand it to the secondary school level.

Over four years, arts activities developed from the original program have become solidly established within school board policies. Moreover, the school board assumed a crucial role in fostering the growth of a tradition. Both the initial Endowment grant and subsequent administrative support funded by the school system received board approval during a period when financial cuts were necessary.

Direct exposure of the school board to programs in the schools generated and secured top-level support. The school board held its meetings in different schools where programs were beginning, and board members sought information about and invitations to ongoing demonstrations of the arts programs in operation during regular school hours.

Dr. Topping says, "Once a person sees the program, it sells itself." However, it is clear that someone must make certain that school board members actually see outstanding programs in operation. "The mistake that many school systems make is that the board does not get involved early enough so that they can make a commitment later," he says. Dr. Topping stresses that traditions start small and grow gradually. "You don't get the school board and the professional staff to understand the arts overnight. Even after four years, we have many different levels of comprehension of what we're doing and why."

Policies and objectives

Written educational policies offer formal guideposts for planning. Often they explain the "why" as well as the "what" of educational programs. It is important for you to compare policy statements about other subject areas (the 3 R's especially) with those about the arts. Be especially alert for disproportionate emphasis on print as the preferred means of transmitting information and knowledge.

A chief educational priority in any school district is likely to resemble one of the Princeton, New Jersey, school board: "Each student should develop competence in reading, writing, speaking, and listening to English and develop a theoretical and functional knowledge of mathematics." Ask the following kinds of questions: Are statements about the arts equally clear and forceful? Or do they refer more abstractly to enjoyment of learning, creative use of leisure time, and acquiring familiarity with the worlds of art, music, drama, and so forth? Can the growing understanding that arts are basic to a sound education be translated into clearer and more durable statements?

Good policy follows good practice, not vice versa, and it may be premature to alter established statements of educational policy until a tradition is apparent. However, there is another method for clarifying policy: the board resolution. It is often easier and more acceptable for a

board to adopt a resolution that amplifies rather than reverses or challenges the meaning of a policy.

Objectives that flow from policy statements clarify the purpose and form of programs. While objectives are formulated by professionals trained to write in the special language of the behavioral sciences, it is crucial for you to study objectives to ascertain that they embody the intentions of board policy. The White Plains objectives for Arts in General Education (1979-80) are exemplary, for they explain not only what they intend, but what they do *not* intend. For example:

☐ To incorporate the arts (architecture, poetry, dance, drama, mime, music, and the visual arts) as an integral part of the instructional program of the five K-4 schools and the 5-6 intermediate school.

☐ To have as many classsroom teachers as possible involved in the program. As the program progresses, these teachers should be willing to *incorporate* activities learned from the "artist" into their instructional program. Communication between the teachers and artists is vital to the success of the program.

☐ To have art and music teachers of the schools involved in the program relate the subject they teach to other subjects in the curriculum. Classroom teachers should also assume the responsibility for relating the various subjects to each other. It is important that while relating their subject to other areas of the curriculum, special area teachers are not compromising the basic tenets of art or music education.

Long-range planning

As a tradition for the arts develops, a school board should lead in long-range planning that includes the arts. The Seattle school system, for instance, recently adopted a ten-year plan, an outgrowth of a board-appointed committee that produced *The Futures Paper*. This document indicates to Seattle's educational planners–professionals in each curriculum discipline area, for example–how societal trends and future issues can affect the students of tomorrow. The *Paper* is a policy guide in that administrators of all curriculum disciplines have been instructed to use its recommendations to assist professional educators in writing their plans.

The first principle to guide educational change for all grades states that "education must become more experiential, multisensory, and holistic. . . At the elementary level, (this) learning can take the form of. . . nonverbal activities such as movement education, games, music, art, and theater." Although these generalizations do not indicate exactly which arts should be taught, they and the philosophic rationale developed at length in the *Paper* spell out why the kinds of educational benefits that characterize the arts should be a priority for future teaching and learning in Seattle. Ray Thompson believes that the implications for planners are sufficiently clear, especially because thorough discussion of *The Futures Paper* in the community has reinforced the commitment of the school board to the *Paper's* basic tenets. He says, "I anticipate a fairly significant shift to aesthetic learning, particularly in the elementary schools."

Evaluating programs

Although extensive evaluations of educational programs that rely heavily upon the arts would help school boards make informed decisions, few school systems can afford to allocate their limited funds to research and evaluation of ongoing programs. Nevertheless, useful assessments of arts programs for the purpose of assisting decision making are possible through networks of community organizations and parents as well as professionals.

In the Jefferson County school district, which sprawls over 800 square miles, the school board maintains a steady flow of information from local community groups. It also relies upon the district arts coordinator to strengthen the links between community groups interested in the arts and the school system.

The Seattle school board also invites and seeks information from parents and community organizations. In recent years, several alternative schools and programs have been established as part of a plan to desegregate the school system. For both parents and students, programs stressing the arts continue to be among the most popular offerings, and the school board recognizes such responses as valid indications of quality.

In White Plains, the school board made its substantial commitments to support the arts in elementary and intermediate schools with the aid of formal evaluations of funded experiments. However, Ronald Topping believes that the most powerful factor in the board's decisions has been firsthand acquaintance with the programs themselves, together with plentiful evidence of parents' enthusiasm for the programs.

The task ahead: a call for leadership

The major task facing school board members who advocate the arts is collaboration with others to create the kind of understanding which will be compelling throughout the school system–professional and community consensus which is reflected in board policies. This requires leadership and individual initiatives.

Seattle's Ray Thompson recalls an initiative taken by a Bellingham, Washington, school board member. After attending

meetings with Bellingham school administrators interested in Seattle's arts programs, she also attended several presentations he made before the state music educators' conference. Wherever possible she gathered information and names of individuals who could help her establish a program in her school district.

James Koneazny, a Milwaukee, Wisconsin, board member, also believes that board leadership comes from individuals. Mr. Koneazny proposed a project to transform a vacant high school into a learning center for the arts. As a consequence of the board's decision to implement his proposal, the Elm School for the Creative Arts was established. It now provides a place where students can work directly with artists, and the school also encourages the arts in the surrounding community.

Probably the most feasible and consistently effective leadership from a school board member requires steady, patient efforts to achieve broad consensus in the schools and the community to support the arts, using resources at hand. As a policymaker who is both an idealist and cost-conscious pragmatist, you can take a major role in preserving and expanding school arts programs in your district and contribute to the quality of education in your community for years to come.